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PAGE 01 STATE 006150

15

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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 006150

SUBJ: TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON FOREIGN JOURNALISTS

REF: (A) MOSCOW 18615 OF DECEMBER 31, 1975,
(B) MOSCOW 0177, (C) STATE A-7356 OF DECEMBER 10, 1975
(NOTAL)

1. IN REPLY TO SOVIET MODIFICATION OF TRAVEL REQUEST PROCEDURE FOR US JOURNALISTS, DEPARTMENT PLANS ADVISE SOVIET EMBASSY BY DEPARTMENT NOTE AROUND FEBRUARY 1 THAT AS OF MARCH 1 SOVIET JOURNALISTS IN US WILL BE SUBJECT TO SAME 24 HOUR NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT FOR TRAVEL TO CERTAIN AREAS AS SOVIET DIPLOMATS RESIDENT IN WASHINGTON AND THAT NOTEFREE TRAVEL WILL BE PERMITTED TO THE AREAS DESIGNATED FOR NOTEFREE TRAVEL FOR SOVIET DIPLOMATS IN WASHINGTON BY THE DEPARTMENT'S NOTE OF APRIL 5, 1974 AND THE DEPARTMENT'S OPAL COMMUNICATION OF AUGUST 12, 1974 REGARDING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN TRAVEL ON THE MOSCOW CANAL AND AND TRAVEL TO OCEAN CITY (SEE STATE 17635 OF AUG. 13, 1974).

2. FOLLOWING IS DRAFT TEXT OF NOTE DEPARTMENT PROPOSES SUBMIT TO SOVIET EMBASSY ON THIS SUBJECT:

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESENTS ITS COMPLIMENTS TO THE EMBASSY OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS AND

REFERS TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF DECEMBER 31, 1975 OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE USSR CONCERNING ITS DECISION TO EASE THE TRAVEL CONTROLS FOR U.S. JOURNALISTS IN THE SOVIET UNION AS OF MARCH 1, 1976.

THE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES THIS INITIATIVE, WHICH WE CONSIDER A USEFUL STEP IN LINE WITH PROVISIONS OF THE FINAL ACT OF THE CONFERENCE OF SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT FURTHER PROGRESS CAN BE MADE SOON ON THE GENERAL QUESTION OF TRAVEL CONTROLS IN BOTH COUNTRIES, AND TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE THE WILLINGNESS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO DISCUSS WITH THE SOVIET SIDE ANY PROPOSAL TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE THE RESTRICTIONS ON THE TRAVEL OF THE CITIZENS OF EACH COUNTRY IN THE COUNTRY OF THE OTHER.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 006150

THE DEPARTMENT IS PLEASED TO ADVISE THE EMBASSY THAT AS OF MARCH 1, 1976 THE TRAVEL REGULATIONS FOR DIPLOMATS RESIDENT IN WASHINGTON SET FORTH IN THE DEPARTMENT'S NOTE OF APRIL 5, 1974 TO THE EMBASSY WILL ALSO APPLY TO SOVIET JOURNALISTS RESIDENT IN THE UNITED STATES. CONSEQUENTLY, AS OF MARCH 1 JOURNALISTS OF THE USSR RESIDENT IN THE UNITED STATES MAY TRAVEL BY ANY MEANS OF TRANSPORT, ON THE BASIS OF WRITTEN NOTIFICATION 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE

(EIGHT HOURS OF WHICH CORRESPOND TO ONE WORKING DAY), BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND SAN FRANCISCO AND BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK, AND TO CITIES OTHERWISE OPEN TO TRAVEL BY SOVIET OFFICIAL PERSONNEL WHICH ARE LOCATED ON THE INTER-STATE HIGHWAY NETWORK IN THE STATES OF NEW JERSEY, PENNSYLVANIA, MARYLAND, WEST VIRGINIA, VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, GEORGIA, ALABAMA, AND TENNESSEE.

SOVIET JOURNALISTS RESIDENT IN THE UNITED STATES MAY ALSO TRAVEL FROM WASHINGTON BY AUTOMOBILE OR BUS WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION ALONG THE ROUTES SPECIFIED TO THE CITIES OF:

WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA, VIA ROUTE US 50,
FRONT ROYAL, VIRGINIA, VIA ROUTES US 50 AND US 340,
LURAY, VIRGINIA, VIA ROUTES US 50 AND US 340,
FREDERICK, MARYLAND, VIA ROUTE I-270,
GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA, VIA ROUTES I-270, US 15,
AND VIA ROUTES US 50, US 301, AND MARYLAND 18 TO THE
SOVIET EMBASSY RECREATIONAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT PIONEER
POINT, MARYLAND.

SOVIET JOURNALISTS WHO TRAVEL TO GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA AS SPECIFIED ABOVE MAY ALSO VISIT, WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION, THE GETTYSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK AS WELL AS A

CIRCULAR AREA EIGHT MILES IN DIAMETER CENTERED UPON THE
PARK HEADQUARTERS.

EFFECTIVE MARCH 1 SOVIET JOURNALISTS MAY ALSO TRAVEL WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION ON THE EASTERN SHORE OF MARYLAND ON ROUTE US 50 AS FAR SOUTH AS THE CITY OF EASTON. FURTHERMORE, AT SUCH TIME AS US JOURNALISTS IN THE SOVIET UNION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 006150

ARE PERMITTED TO TRAVEL ON THE MOSCOW CANAL SOVIET JOURNALISTS RESIDENT IN THE US WILL BE PERMITTED TO TRAVEL TO OCEAN CITY WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION VIA ROUTE US 50.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AVAILS ITSELF OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW TO THE EMBASSY THE ASSURANCE OF ITS HIGHEST CONSIDERATION. END TEXT.

3. EMBASSY'S COMMENTS ON SUBSTANCE OF DRAFT NOTE WOULD BE WELCOME. DEPARTMENT WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE SUMMARY OF 1975 TRAVEL SITUATION FOR US CORRESPONDENTS RESIDENT MOSCOW INCLUDING EXTENT OF ACCESS TO CLOSED AREAS IF AVAILABLE. FOR STATISTICAL PORTION OF REPORT, EMBASSY MAY WISH USE FORMAT ADOPTED BY DEPARTMENT IN REPAIR.

4. EMBASSY AUTHORIZED TO INFORM MFA PRESS DIVISION THAT WE PLAN TO RECIPROCATE IN NEAR FUTURE BY EXTENDING SAME CONDITIONS TO SOVIET JOURNALISTS AS ARE NOW APPLICABLE TO SOVIET DIPLOMATS.

5. RE PARA 5 REFTTEL B, DEPARTMENT CONCURS THAT FURTHER EASING OF US TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS WOULD BE DESIRABLE PRIOR TO MARCH 1, PERHAPS IN CONTEXT OF NEW APPROACH TO MFA ON CSCE. DEPARTMENT IS CURRENTLY STAFFING OUT SUCH AN APPROACH AND WILL SUBMIT IT TO EMBASSY FOR COMMENT. IN MEANTIME, EMBASSY SUGGESTIONS ON CONTENT OF APPROACH WOULD BE WELCOME. KISSINGER

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